

Annual Report to Parliament for 2022

Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act



Environment and
Climate Change Canada

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Highlights

International: The 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP19) to the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was held in Panama City, Panama in November 2022. The CoP considered 52 proposals on species trade, including proposals to add or transfer 10 species that are found in Canada to Appendix II of CITES. Among these are Blue shark, a number of turtle and lizard species and Roseroot plants. Additionally, Canada completed its mandate as Chair of the CITES Standing Committee in 2022, Chairing the 74th and 75th meetings, which were held in March 2022 and November 2022 respectively.

Domestic: In 2022, ECCC continued to promote compliance with CITES and WAPPRITA by providing guidance on its [website](#). The website includes information on trade impacts on animals and plants, WAPPRITA (and its regulations) and CITES. [Posters](#) with information for travelers regarding trade in endangered species were distributed at the American Association of Zoo Keepers national conference which took place in Toronto, Ontario, from October 13 to 17, 2022. ECCC was also able to continue to promote compliance through more than 20 informational displays located at various venues, including: airports, science centres, zoos, customs offices and border crossings.

Exports: The majority of shipments in 2022 were of cultivated American Ginseng and specimens for scientific and medical research. The CITES office of ECCC continues its implementation of a custom ginseng export program for artificially propagated ginseng, whereby Ontario ginseng growers in good standing with the Ontario Ginseng Growers Association (OGGA) can qualify for permits valid for 12-months and automatically renewed. The members of the program received their automatically renewed permits in August of 2022. Additional growers have joined, seeing the benefits of this simplified approach.

Imports: Canada issued 161 CITES [import permits](#), which were mainly for the import of old ivory, captive bred Arowana for private collectors, personal pets, and zoo animals. In addition, four import permits were issued for the import of species posing a risk to Canadian ecosystems, including Meerkats and Salamanders.

Enforcement: ECCC conducted 3,886 inspections under WAPPRITA. Most inspections focused on foreign species at high conservation risk. There were 287 offences of WAPPRITA or its regulations, which resulted in administrative monetary penalties, tickets or warnings. There were four successful prosecutions related to offences under WAPPRITA which involved the illegal import of European eel, shark fins, cacti, and the illegal export of a Dall sheep.

1. Introduction

Under section 28 of the *Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act* (WAPPRIITA), the Minister of the Environment must report annually to Parliament on the administration of the Act. This report covers the administration of the Act for the year 2022.

Section 1 provides information on WAPPRIITA and outlines the responsibilities of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) in administering the Act. Subsequent sections discuss:

- the management of wild animals and plants in trade
- assessing the risk to species from trade
- compliance promotion and enforcement
- international cooperation

1.1. CITES and WAPPRIITA

The *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* ([CITES](#)) came into force in 1975 and has been adopted by 184 parties. CITES is an international agreement between governments. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the survival of the species. Such species are identified by the Parties to the Convention and are listed in one of three appendices to the Convention according to the degree of protection they need.

Appendices to the Convention

Appendix I

Species that are threatened with extinction which are or may be affected by trade. Trade in specimens of these species is permitted only in exceptional circumstances.

Appendix II

Species that are not currently threatened but in which trade must be controlled in order to avoid utilization incompatible with their survival.

Appendix III

Species included upon request of a country to seek cooperation of other countries.

WAPPRIITA was adopted in 1992, but came into force when the enabling regulation, the *Wild Animal and Plant Trade Regulations* (WAPTR), was adopted on May 14, 1996. It provides Canada with the authority to regulate trade in animal and plant species, helping Canada meet its international obligations under CITES.

The purpose of WAPPRIITA is to protect certain species of animals and plants, particularly by implementing CITES and regulating international and interprovincial trade in animals and plants. The act applies to the following animal and plant species:

- species on the CITES control list
- foreign species whose capture, possession, and export are prohibited or regulated by laws in their country of origin
- Canadian species whose capture, possession, and transportation are regulated by provincial or territorial laws
- species whose introduction into Canadian ecosystems could endanger Canadian species

WAPTR includes authorities to issue permits, provide exemptions to permitting requirements, and to define the animals and plants that are subject to permitting. While the focus is mainly on the implementation of CITES, WAPTR also has provisions for controlling the import of species which may be deemed injurious to Canadian ecosystems through a permitting regime. Species whose trade is controlled in Canada are listed on the three schedules of the WAPTR.

Schedule I

Includes all animals listed as fauna and all plants listed as flora in the three CITES appendices. These species require permits for import/export unless otherwise exempted.

Schedule II

Lists other plant and animal species which do not necessarily appear in the CITES appendices but require an import permit. These are species that may pose a risk to Canadian ecosystems.

Schedule III

Lists the Schedule I species that are recognized as endangered or threatened within Canada.

1.2. Responsibilities in administering WAPPRIITA



ECCC is responsible for the administration and enforcement of WAPPRIITA and is the designated Management Authority and Scientific Authority for the purpose of CITES.

As the Management Authority, ECCC has the overall responsibility for verifying and validating requests for international trade of specimens of animals and plants that are regulated under CITES originating from, or destined for, Canada. This responsibility includes issuing CITES permits and certificates.

As the Scientific Authority, ECCC has the overall responsibility for determining whether the international trade of a species is detrimental to its survival. This responsibility includes monitoring the international trade of wild animals and plants to and from Canada to ensure that current levels of trade are sustainable.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada is responsible for the issuance of permits and validation of export requests for specimens of

CITES-listed aquatic species. Further information on the roles and responsibilities of federal departments in the implementation and administration of CITES can be found [online](#).

Furthermore, ECCC oversees the enforcement of WAPPRIITA, which is carried out in cooperation with other federal departments and agencies, such as the Canada Border Services Agency, and with provincial and territorial wildlife agencies. Border officials play an important role at ports of entry, manually verifying and validating permits and referring shipments to ECCC personnel for inspection, as required.

ECCC maintains enforcement agreements and memoranda of understanding with Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia and Nunavut. The agreements and memoranda of understanding establish a collaborative approach to enforcing WAPPRIITA with respect to interprovincial wildlife trade.

2. Management of wild animals and plants in trade

The effective implementation of CITES depends on international cooperation to regulate cross-border movement of listed species through a global system of permits that are verified at international borders.

2.1. Permitting overview

In Canada, CITES permits are issued pursuant to WAPPRIITA. Schedule I of WAPTR includes all CITES-listed species.

2.1.1. Requirements

There are different permit requirements depending on the CITES appendix under which the species is listed:

- Appendix I species require both an import and export permit
- Appendix II species require an export permit
- Appendix III species require an export permit or a certificate of origin

Table 1 describes the various types of permits and certificates that are issued under WAPPRIITA.

Table 1. Types of canadian permits and certificates under WAPPRIITA

Type of permit or certificate	Description
Import permit	Issued for all specimens of species included in Schedule I of the WAPTR that are also listed in CITES Appendix I. An export permit from the exporting country is also required to authorize the importation into Canada. Import permits are valid for up to one year.
Export permit	Issued for all specimens of species included in Schedule I of the WAPTR that are also listed in CITES Appendix I and II to be exported from Canada. An export permit is required for species listed in CITES Appendix III that originate in Canada and proposed for listing by Canada (for example, Walrus). Multiple shipments under a permit can be authorized when the applicant intends to make multiple transactions during the period for which the permit is valid. Export permits are valid for up to six months.
Re-export certificate	Issued for all specimens of species included in Schedule I of the WAPTR to be exported from Canada after having been legally imported into Canada at an earlier time. Multiple shipments under a permit can be authorized when the applicant intends to make multiple transactions during the period for which the permit is valid. Re-export certificates are valid for up to six months.
Certificate of ownership	Issued to authorize frequent cross-border movement of personally owned live CITES-listed animals (also known as a pet passport). Certificates of ownership are valid for up to three years.

<p>Temporary movement/ travelling exhibition certificate</p>	<p>Issued for specimens that are only temporarily exported from Canada and that will, within a limited amount of time, be returned to Canada. Authorization can be provided for orchestras, museum exhibits or circus specimens that are either pre-CITES, captive-bred or artificially propagated. Authorization can also be provided for individuals travelling with musical instruments containing parts made from CITES-listed species (for example, ivory, Brazilian Rosewood). Temporary movement certificates are valid for up to three years.</p>
<p>Scientific certificate</p>	<p>Issued for the exchange between CITES-registered scientific institutions of museum, research and herbarium specimens. Scientific certificates are valid for up to three years.</p>
<p>Injurious wildlife permit</p>	<p>An injurious wildlife permit is necessary for importing specimens of species posing risks to Canadian ecosystems that are included in Schedule II of the WAPTR. These could be for zoos and scientific institutions; or for the import of fur products or garments.</p>

2.1.2. Exemptions

WAPPRIITA authorizes exemptions, in specific situations, for the import and export of CITES-listed species without permits. WAPTR specifies four exemptions: tourist souvenirs, personal effects, household effects and certain hunting trophies. The hunting trophy exemption applies to fresh, frozen or salted trophies of Black Bear and Sandhill Crane, acquired and possessed by individuals through legal hunting in Canada or the United States. Further information on exemptions is available [online](#).

Canadian threatened or endangered species listed on Schedule III of the WAPTR are not included in these exemptions and require all necessary CITES permits.



Big black bear of the Queen Charlotte Islands

2.1.3. Service standards under WAPPRIITA

ECCC has established service standards for WAPPRIITA permit decisions and the issuance of permits. ECCC’s goal is to provide permit decisions within a certain number of days (depending on the permit type), and to meet these standards for at least 90% of all permit applications. The performance is tracked on a fiscal year basis (i.e., from April 1 to March 31 of the following year). The Department’s performance history against these standards is published [online](#).

For the period covering April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023, performance targets for all CITES permit categories were met. The percentage of permit decisions made within the service standards were:

- 98% hunting trophy exports
- 96% Polar Bear exports
- 97% for all other permit types

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the CITES permitting staff worked remotely from mid-March 2020 until September 2022 with only a few staff going into the office to print and mail permits, etc. The permit delivery methods put in place in 2020 as a result of COVID-19 restrictions were lifted in September 2022 as most staff returned to the office two days per week.

Only three applications were received for WAPTR injurious wildlife permits during the year. All the decisions were made within the standard of 70 calendar days. ECCC’s performance history against this standard is published [online](#).

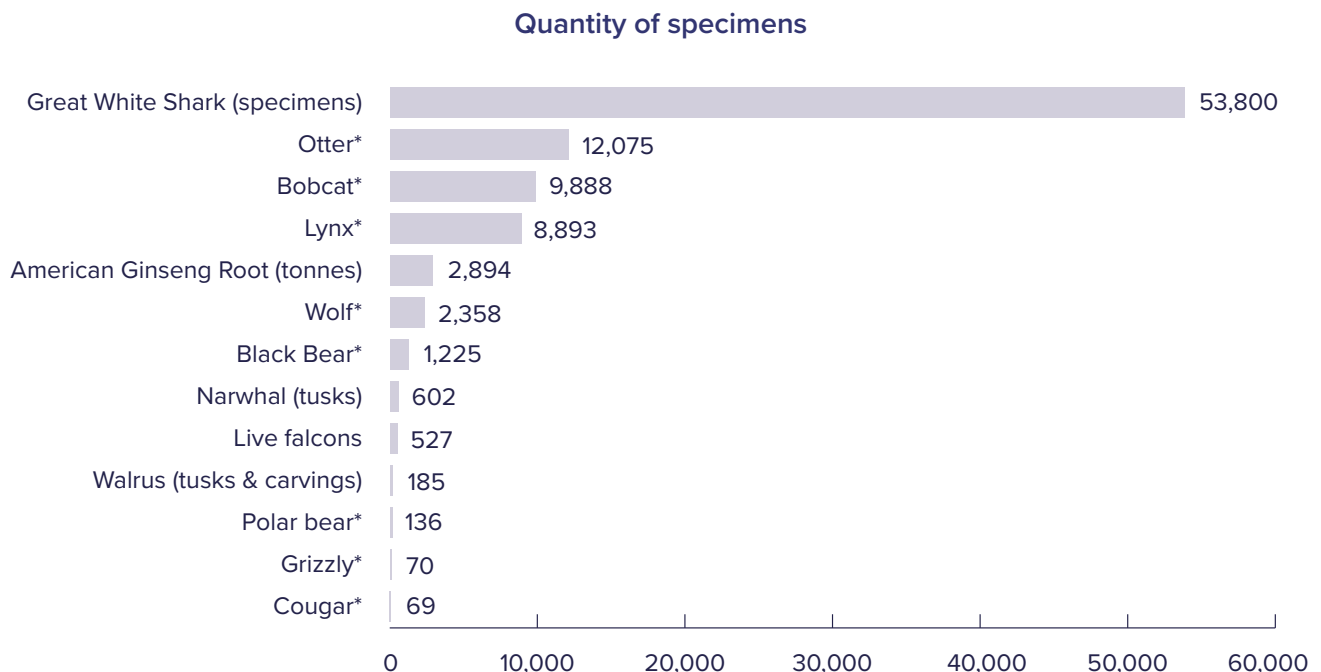
2.2. Annual report to CITES



Every country that is Party to CITES is required to submit to the CITES Secretariat an [annual report](#) by October 31, covering actions in the preceding calendar year (for example, the 2021 annual report was due on October 31, 2022). The data from the annual reports are included in the [database](#) maintained for the CITES Secretariat and provide the basis for comparative trade analysis, the Review of Significant Trade, quota management, identification of Parties with high trade volumes under the National Legislation Project, reports to various fora and overall compliance and enforcement.

Figure 1 highlights some of the most important exports and re-exports reported by Canada in its 2021 CITES annual report. In 2021, Canada issued permits for 262 different CITES-listed species.

Figure 1. High volume exports or re-exports listed in the Canada 2021 CITES annual report (Canadian Species)



*May include skin, body, trophy, garment or skulls.

Other high-volume exports and re-exports reported by Canada in its 2021 CITES annual report

Exports/Re-exports	Imports
 <p>Crocodile leather products 1,343</p>	 <p>Arowana 493</p>
 <p>Artificially propagated cacti (grown in Canada) 292,345</p>	 <p>Elephant ivory carvings & pieces^b 371</p>
 <p>Macques (scientific specimens) 532,586 grams, 21,572 milliliters, 171,512 specimens</p>	
 <p>Live lizards^a 518</p>	
 <p>Live poison dart frogs^a 883</p>	
 <p>Live pythons and boas^a 2,209</p>	
 <p>Elephant ivory carvings & pieces^b 1,052</p>	
 <p>Birdwing Butterflies (mounted bodies) 304</p>	

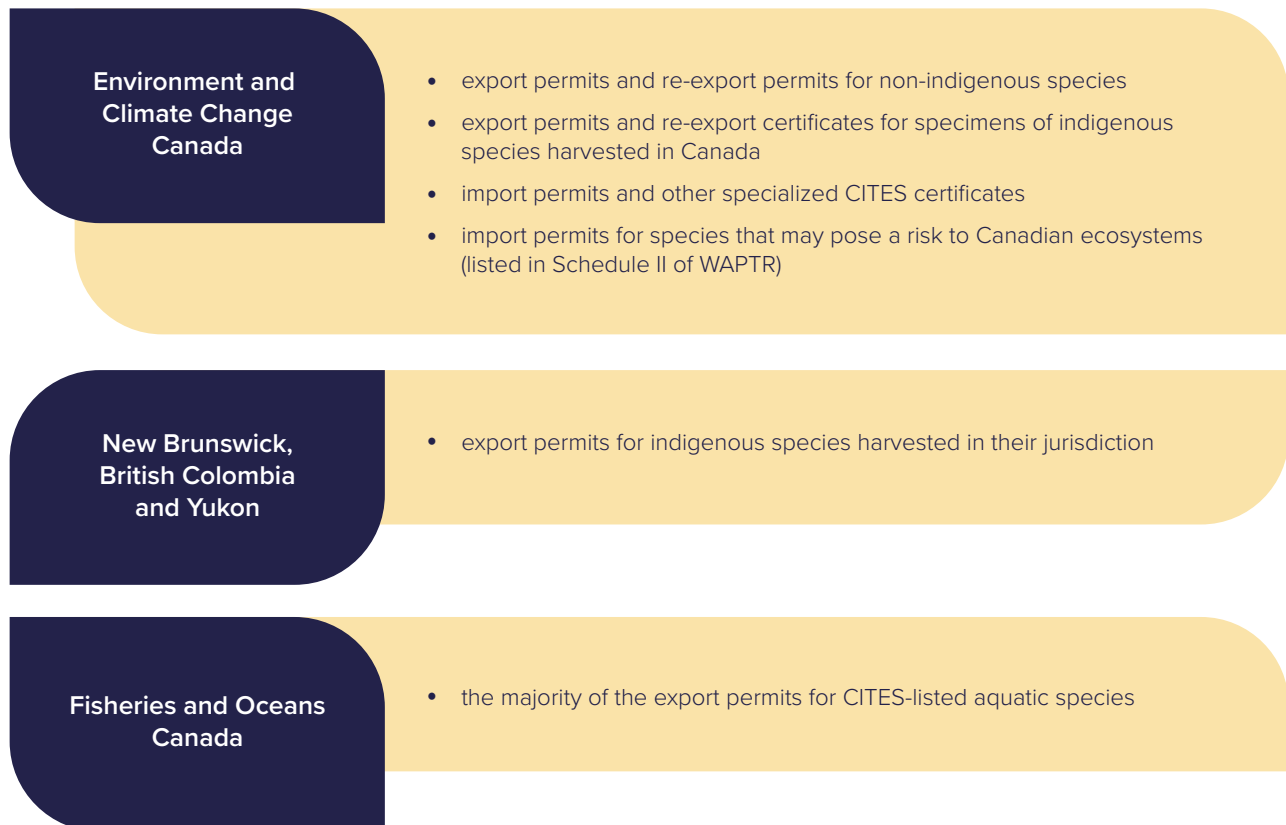
^a Bred in captivity in Canada

^b One piano = 52 ivory pieces

2.3. CITES permits issued in 2022

Federally, CITES permits are issued by ECCC and Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Permits are also issued by New Brunswick, British Columbia, and Yukon. Figure 2 sets out the division of responsibility for the issuing of permits and certificates.

Figure 2. Division of responsibility for the issuance of CITES permits and certificates



2.3.1. Export permits and re-export certificates

Export permits are issued for specimens (animals, plants, their parts or derivatives) of CITES-listed species that originate in Canada and that are being exported from Canada for the first time.

Re-export certificates are used to track trade in specimens that entered Canada under the authorization of permits issued by foreign states and that were then re-exported from Canada.

Canadian CITES permitting offices issued 4,866 CITES export permits and re-export certificates under WAPPRITA in 2022. The number of permits issued increased by 30% compared to 2021. The levels have almost returned to 2020 levels (5% lower than 2020), but they are still 34% lower compared to 2019, as international trade and travel recover from the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns. Table 2 shows the number of export permits and re-export certificates issued in 2022 by Canadian CITES permitting offices.

Table 2. CITES export permits and re-export certificates issued in Canadian CITES permitting offices in 2022

Canadian jurisdiction	Number of export permits and re-export certificates issued	Percentage of total export permits and re-export certificates issued by Canada (percentages are rounded)
Federal Government		
Environment and Climate Change Canada	3,928	80.7%
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	168	3.4%
Provinces and Territories		
British Columbia	642	13.2%
New Brunswick	57	1.2%
Yukon	71	1.5%
Total	4,866	100%

The number of permits issued is not indicative of trade volumes as it is not a one-to-one relationship between permits issued and the quantity of specimens on the permit. Each export permit or re-export certificate can authorize the export of multiple specimens or species. Each species and their parts or derivatives is listed on a permit. In the case of export of biomedical samples, for example, a permit could represent hundreds of specimens (such as blood, serum, microscope slides, and paraffin blocks). In other cases, there may be few specimens listed on the permit, but large quantities for each specimen (for example, hundreds of Bobcat and Lynx skins from a fur auction).

When a species is protected under CITES, a permit is required for all specimens of that species (unless exemptions apply). A specimen can be the live species, parts or derivatives of the species, or finished products made from those species. There are over 35,000 species listed under CITES with approximately 29,000 of those species being plants (such as Orchids, Cacti, and Rosewood). While there is a small number of species listed under CITES which are indigenous to Canada, many foreign species are imported into Canada and either re-exported, bred or propagated in Canada, or transformed into finished products in Canada.





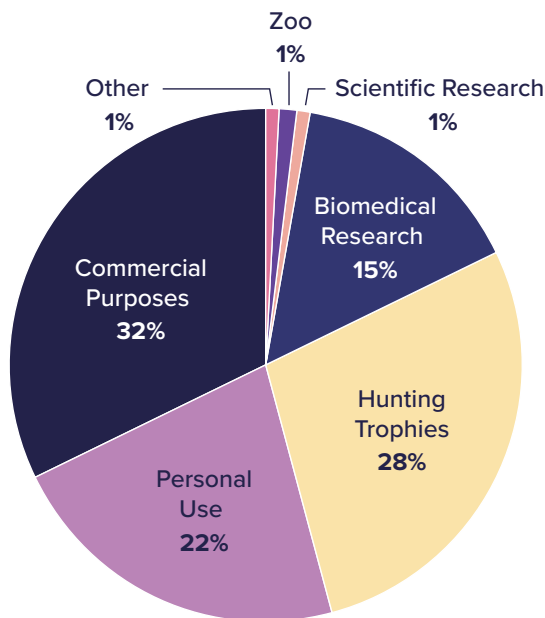
In 2022, Canada issued export permits and re-export certificates for the following purposes using the transaction codes as defined in CITES Resolution 12.3¹:

- Hunting trophies
- Personal use
- Scientific research
- Commercial purposes
- Biomedical research
- Breeding
- Other

Since 2021, the CITES office of ECCC implements a special export program for artificially propagated ginseng whereby Ontario ginseng growers in good standing with the Ontario Ginseng Growers Association (OGGA) qualify for permits valid for 12-months which are automatically renewed. This program has significantly reduced administrative burden for ginseng growers who were previously submitting applications for permits every six months. It has also addressed issues with large ginseng shipments arriving at the destination country with expired permits due to shipping delays. Seventy-one out of the 165 Ontario ginseng growers in good standing with OGGA are registered with the program.

Figure 3 and Figure 4 show the percentage of distribution of export permits and re-export certificates, by purpose of transaction, issued in 2022 and issued between 2013 and 2022, respectively.

Figure 3. Percentage of CITES export permits and re-export certificates issued in 2022, by purpose of transaction



Notes

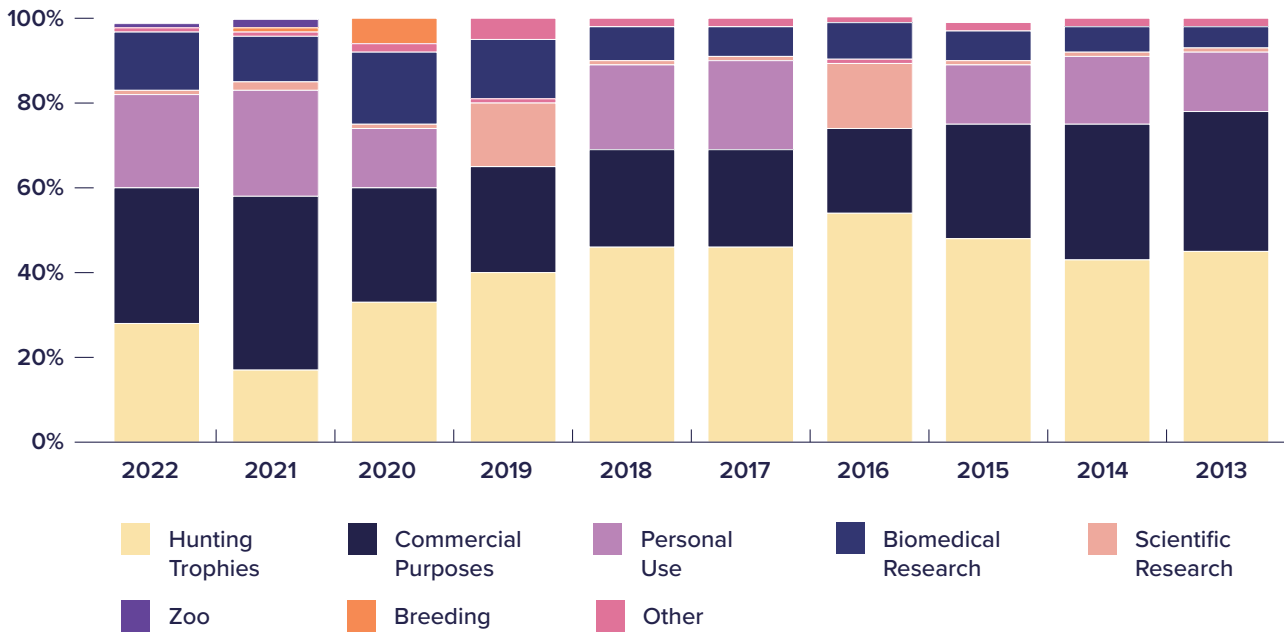
Purpose of transactions for export and re-export permits are relatively constant from year to year.

The “Other” category includes:

- Breeding (20)
- Exhibition (9)
- Reintroduction to the Wild (7)
- Education (8)
- Law Enforcement (1)

¹ CITES Resolution 12.3 on Permits and Certificates was agreed to in 2002 and reviewed in 2018.

Figure 4. Percentages of CITES export permits and re-export certificates issued in previous years, by purpose of transaction (some numbers have been rounded.)



Notes

The “Other” Category for 2022 includes enforcement, exhibitions, reintroduction to the wild, education and breeding.

The “Other” category for 2021 includes exhibitions, educational, and enforcement.

The “Other” category for 2020 includes scientific research, exhibitions, zoos, exhibitions, reintroduction in the wild, law enforcement and educational.

The “Other” category for 2019 includes breeding, exhibitions, zoos, law enforcement, and reintroduction in the wild.

The “Other” category in previous years includes exhibitions, zoos, law enforcement, botanical gardens and reintroduction in the wild.

Table 3 indicates the number of export permits issued in each of the past nine calendar years for Polar Bears harvested in Canada. The permits may include any Polar Bear specimen – for example, skin, skull, claws, or baculum. Permits for scientific samples are not included in this analysis, since they are not related to Polar Bear harvest.



Table 3. Number of CITES export permits issued per year for Polar Bears harvested in Canada, and breakdown by the season in which the bears were harvested

Number of Polar Bears by Harvest Season*												
Year Permit Issued	Total Export Permits Issued	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	N/A
2022	100	9	16	18	15	12	10	7	2	3	2	6
2021	169	0	20	29	22	21	14	13	6	21	13	0
2020	109	0	20	31	16	16	8	4	6	2	1	0
2019	148	0	0	29	45	21	20	7	12	6	2	0
2018	206	0	0	0	1	57	40	45	27	18	5	0
2017	215	0	0	0	0	0	45	79	29	24	16	0
2016	232	0	0	0	0	0	0	67	57	50	26	0
2015	292	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	87	88	0
2014	237	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	56	99	0

Harvest season is counted from July to June of the following year. For example, harvest season 2018-2019 started on July 1, 2018, and finished on June 30, 2019.

*N/A would be for bear specimens that were harvested prior to 2012-13 or found specimens (e.g. skulls).

Note

Even if a permit for a specific Polar Bear is issued in a calendar year, the actual export may not take place for various reasons (for example the permit expired before shipment could take place, cancelled shipment, or changes from rug to full mount). A permit could be reissued in the same calendar year or subsequent years for a specific Polar Bear, which was never actually exported under a previously issued permit.

2.3.2. Export or re-export permits for multiple shipments

An export permit or re-export certificate may authorize multiple shipments of specimens. The permit or certificate holder is responsible for identifying the destination, specific specimens and quantities that make up each shipment. This provides a simplified procedure for permit holders who trade in specimens with very little or no impact to the conservation of species. Of the 4,866 export permits and re-export certificates listed in Table 2 for 2022, there were 990 for multiple shipments, authorizing 19,798 shipments. By far, the largest share of multiple shipment permits was issued to growers and distributors of American Ginseng.

In Canada, the export of a small quantity of artificially propagated American Ginseng for personal use (up to 4.5 kg) is authorized through a simplified permitting procedure using ginseng stickers. A permit sticker identifying the permit number under which the multiple shipments are authorized accompanies each shipment. Individual stickers accounted for 62% (12,288 of the 19,798) of the multiple shipment permits authorized in 2022.

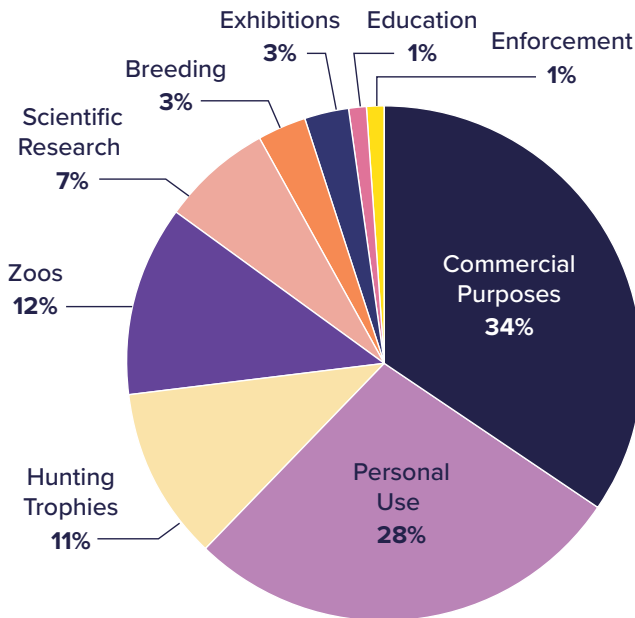


Ginseng Root

2.3.3. Imports into Canada

Figure 5 indicates the distribution of 161 CITES import permits issued in 2022, by purpose as indicated by the CITES transaction code. [Figure 6](#) indicates the percentage of overall CITES import permits issued from 2013 to 2022, by purpose of transaction.

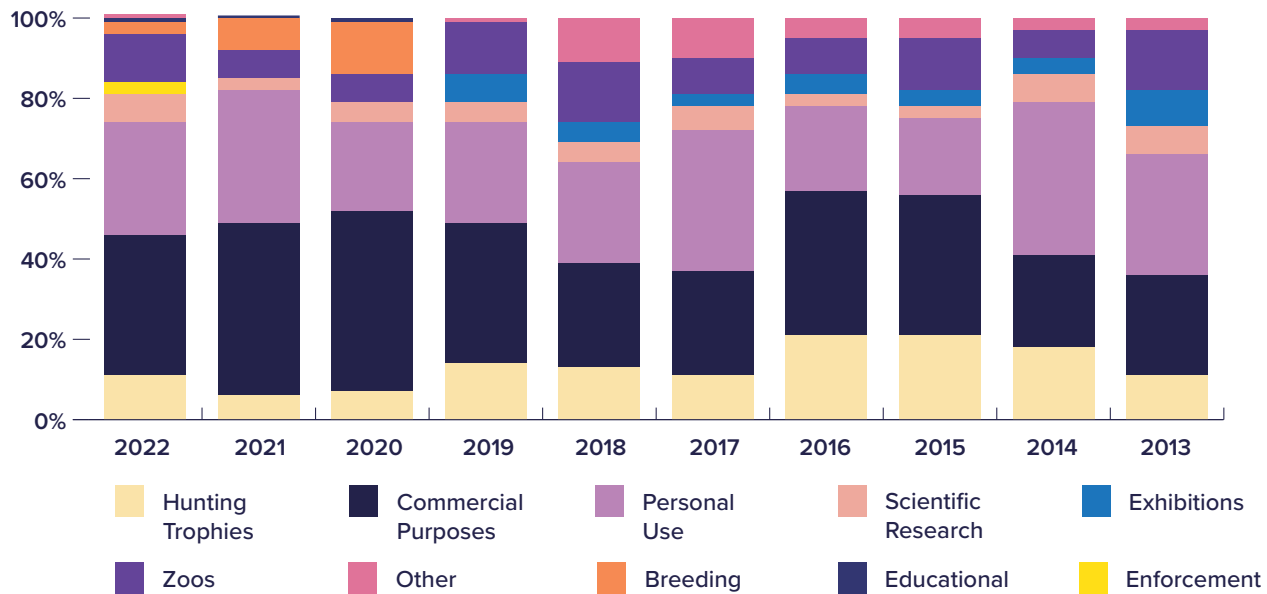
Figure 5. Percentage of CITES import permits issued in 2022, by purpose of transaction



Note

The imports for commercial purposes consist mainly of artificially propagated plants, pre-Convention specimens (such as antiques containing ivory) and captive-bred animals (such as falcons and parrots).

Figure 6. Percentage of CITES import permits issued from 2013 to 2022, by purpose of transaction



2.3.4. Specialized CITES certificates

As indicated in [Table 1](#), there are many types of permits and certificates issued under WAPPRITA. The CITES certificate allows movement of CITES-listed specimens under specific circumstances. There are three types of specialized certificates:

- **Certificate of Ownership:** allows owners of CITES-listed species to travel across international borders for personal non-commercial use.
- **Temporary Movement Certificate:** allows for the temporary import, export or re-export of CITES-listed animals or plants, which may be alive or dead, whole or in parts, or any products made from them (for example, musical instruments) for travelling exhibition purposes only (for example, performance, museum or art exhibition).
- **Scientific Certificate:** used by Canadian CITES-registered institutions to exchange specimens with CITES-registered institutions in another country. This facilitates the movement of scientific samples for research and cataloguing.

While these specialized certificates represent a modest number of permits issued each year, they serve a very important function by facilitating the movement of specimens of CITES-listed species in low-risk situations.

Table 4. CITES certificates issued from 2012 to 2021 by type

Year	Certificate of Ownership	Temporary Movement Certificate	Scientific Certificate	Total
2022	122	16	10	148
2021	62	10	11	83
2020	41	11	3	55
2019	81	52	5	138
2018	49	37	7	93
2017	65	41	11	117
2016	104	40	1	145
2015	68	27	5	100
2014	68	45	13	126
2013	88	33	5	126
2012	74	25	No data	99

2.4. Permits specific to WAPTR

Canada requires import permits, referred to as injurious wildlife permits, for certain species that may pose a risk to Canadian ecosystems, but do not necessarily appear in the CITES appendices. Injurious wildlife permits are most commonly issued to allow the import of live animals for exhibits at zoos or for research by scientific institutions. The targeted species are listed in Schedule II of WAPTR and include Raccoon Dogs, Mongooses, Starlings, Mynas, and Oxpeckers as well as all species under the order Caudata, which includes Salamanders, Newts and Mudpuppies.



Salamander

Table 5. Injurious wildlife permits issued from 2017 to 2022

Year	Live animals (Salamanders)	Garments/Scientific Specimens	Total
2022	4	0	4
2021	9	0	9
2020	2	1	3
2019	4	6	10
2018	5	5	10
2017	4	1	5

2.5. Canada's trading partners

The United States, the member countries of the European Union and the countries of East and Southeast Asia continue to be Canada's major trading partners under CITES, particularly for exports. In 2022, exports to the United States and the European Union covered a wide range of specimens and species. In the case of East and Southeast Asia, cultivated American Ginseng was the most exported species from Canada, with these regions accounting for the majority of Canada's exports for ginseng. Canada also exported a large number of captive bred falcons (498 in 2022) primarily to Middle Eastern countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates).

3. Assessing the risk to species from trade

Countries exporting specimens of species listed in CITES Appendices I or II must provide a scientific determination that such export will not be detrimental to the survival of the species. This determination is referred to as a non-detriment finding (NDF). Some countries, such as the United States and member countries of the European Union, enforce regulations that are stricter than CITES, leading to a higher level of scrutiny when they are considering exports and NDFs from exporting countries.

3.1. Non-detriment findings

Canada's NDFs are consistent with a resolution adopted by the CITES Conference of the Parties, the international guidance for CITES Scientific Authorities, and guidance provided by the CITES Secretariat.



In Canada, NDFs are determined on a permit-by-permit basis. For frequently traded species, standing NDF reports are prepared to support the issuance of export permits. Canada's species-specific standing NDF reports are developed following the process that involves the federal-provincial/territorial CITES Scientific Authorities working group, as well as participation and review by species experts and Indigenous peoples. Canada has standing NDF reports that cover the majority of Canada's trade, which include: American Ginseng, Atlantic Sturgeon, Black Bear, Bobcat, Canadian Lynx, Cougar, Goldenseal, Grey Wolf, Grizzly Bear, Narwhal, Polar Bear, River Otter, and Sandhill Crane. Standing NDF reports are reviewed periodically and, if necessary, updated with the most recent information.

No standing NDF reports were updated for 2022. Canada's Standing Non-Detriment Finding Reports can be found [online](#).

4. Compliance promotion and enforcement of CITES and WAPPRIITA

Poaching and trafficking of wildlife undermines conservation efforts and threatens the conservation of species. Over-exploitation driven by illegal trade can decimate populations of species. Illegal trade can also threaten and destabilize the socio-economic benefits that legal trade in wildlife can provide to certain communities.

ECCC works in partnership with a broad range of enforcement partners to promote and secure compliance with WAPPRIITA. These partners include the Canada Border Services Agency, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Transport Canada, Natural Resources Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, provincial and territorial law enforcement agencies and conservation authorities, as well as the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

ECCC also promotes and verifies compliance with the CITES on the international stage. ECCC is an active partner with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) participating yearly in Operation Thunder, an INTERPOL and World Customs Organization operation targeting the illegal trafficking of CITES species.

4.1. Compliance promotion

Compliance promotion initiatives educate Canadians about the impacts of illegal wildlife trade and provide information on the plant and animal species that cannot be moved across Canadian borders without a WAPPRIITA permit.

In 2022, ECCC continued to promote compliance with CITES and WAPPRIITA by providing guidance on its [website](#). The website includes information on trade impacts on animals and plants, WAPPRIITA (and its regulations) and CITES. [Posters](#) with information for travelers regarding trade in endangered species were distributed at the American Association of Zoo Keepers' national conference, which took place in Toronto, Ontario, from October 13 to 17, 2022. ECCC was also able to continue to promote compliance through more than 20 informational displays located at various venues, including: airports, science centres, zoos, customs offices and border crossings.

4.2. Enforcement activities

Compliance with WAPPRIITA is verified by various means, such as: reviewing permits, auditing import and export declarations, conducting inspections and investigations at ports of entry, conducting routine or spot inspections of wildlife businesses, sharing information with border officials and national and international agencies, gathering information, developing intelligence and following up on tips provided by the public.

4.2.1. Inspections

Inspections are conducted to ensure that the import and export of animals and plants comply with the requirements under WAPPRIITA. Inspections are instrumental in obtaining ongoing information on trends and emerging non-compliance risks and threats. The analysis of information collected through inspections informs the development of risk-based priorities for compliance verification.

Inspections are either proactively planned or conducted in response to a referral from another federal department or agency, such as the Canada Border Services Agency, or provincial or territorial governments, or the public. Most of the inspections conducted under WAPPRIITA are focused on foreign species at high conservation risk (such as, CITES-listed shark fins, eels, elephant ivory tusks and horns of various mammals). This is attributed to the higher demand and volume of foreign species that are imported and exported internationally and inter-provincially.

In 2022, there were 3,886 inspections compared to 1,269 inspections in 2021. This difference can be attributed to the easing of pandemic restrictions related to travel, border crossings and field operations which resulted in a gradual increase in activities.

4.2.2. Investigations

Investigations are very different from inspections. Officers will conduct investigations when they have reasonable grounds to believe that an offence has been, is being, or is about to be committed under the legislation. Investigations involve gathering evidence and information relevant to a suspected violation. Searches are components of investigations but require warrants in all but the most urgent circumstances that is, when the delay in obtaining a warrant could risk the introduction of species potentially harmful to Canadian ecosystems or cause loss or destruction of evidence.

During a search, officers may seize and detain any item that they reasonably believe may have been used to commit an offence under the legislation, is related to the commission of or will provide evidence of an offence. Officers will use their powers of seizure and detention when they believe that the seizure is necessary and in the public interest.

In 2022, ECCC opened 54 new investigations involving international and interprovincial movements of wildlife. The outcomes of these investigations, including media releases and enforcement notifications, are published [online](#).

4.2.3. Offences

Officers will review suspected or alleged offences. If it is determined that there has been no offence or that there is insufficient evidence to warrant further investigation, the officers will take no further enforcement action. If they can substantiate that an offence took place, they have a legal obligation to enforce the law and use their discretionary power to choose the most appropriate response from those reviewed [here](#).

In 2022, there were 287 suspected or alleged offences of WAPPRITA or its regulations. Inspections and investigations resulted in 7 tickets (totalling \$1,460), 26 administrative monetary penalties (AMPs, totalling \$35,800 dollars), and 127 warnings (no fine amount associated).

A total of 127 suspected or alleged offences did not lead to the issuance of an enforcement measure. In some cases, the information, tip or referral received were unfounded or erroneous. In others, the return to compliance was carried out before inspection.

4.2.4. Convictions

In 2022, there were three successful prosecutions, one alternative measures agreement and three arrests following offences of WAPPRITA. More information is available [online](#).

[British Columbia-based trading company fined \\$75,000 and ordered to forfeit 20,196 shark fins](#)

Hang Hing Herbal Medicine Ltd. was sentenced to pay a \$75,000 fine to the Environmental Damages Fund for unlawfully importing a CITES-listed shark species without a permit from the country of export. The company was also ordered to forfeit the entire shipment of processed shark fins, 20,196 fins weighing approximately 550 kg, which removes the specimens from trade. The offence was discovered after the Canadian Border Services Agency referred a shipment marked as fish bones to ECCC, which then conducted DNA analysis to determine that the shipment contained a CITES Appendix II-listed species, *Carcharhinus longimanus* (oceanic whitetip shark). As a result of this conviction, the company's name will be added to the [Environmental Offenders Registry](#). The Registry contains information on convictions of corporations registered for offences committed under certain federal environmental laws.



Enforcement Officer
Conducting a Ground Search



About 400 species of sharks are found in the world. Many shark populations are threatened, largely due to unsustainable fishing practices and the high demand of the international fin trade. Sharks were first included in Appendix II of CITES in 2003 and today 12 species are listed. In 2019, Canada's *Fisheries Act* was amended to prohibit the import of non-attached fins from any shark species. These efforts, among other things, help improve the sustainability of fisheries and discourage harmful fishing practices, including illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing.

Alaskan hunter fined \$8,500 for illegally exporting Yukon wildlife

An Alaska resident was fined \$8,500 for illegally exporting a Dall sheep from the Yukon to Alaska. In addition to the fine, the resident is prohibited from hunting in the Yukon for five years and was ordered to forfeit the Dall sheep trophy displaying the head and horns.

ECCC officers used photographic evidence, conducted ground search, and collaborated with Alaska State Wildlife Troopers, the Yukon Conservation Officer Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine that the Dall sheep was shot from the Alaska side of the border, and exported to Alaska, from the Yukon, without a permit.



Unlawful importation of threatened cacti species in British Columbia leads to house arrest

A British Columbia (BC) resident was sentenced to a Conditional Sentence Order after pleading guilty to two counts of unlawfully importing multiple species of cacti from Germany without obtaining the required permits. The conditions of the sentence included house arrest for one month and 20 hours of community service. The resident was also banned from seeking CITES and WAPPRIITA permits for a period of two years, and was required to forfeit the cacti to the Crown. ECCC officers were informed of the shipment by the Victoria Police Department, and a Canadian Food Inspection Agency inspector identified the cacti as plants listed under CITES.



Ontario-based company contributes \$30,000 to the Environmental Damages Fund for importing protected European eel meat

Ocean Seafood Company met the conditions of an alternative measures agreement, which was reached after the company was charged with an offence under WAPPRIITA. Environmental protection alternative measures allow for a negotiated return to compliance without a court trial. The conditions of the agreement included contributing \$30,000 to the Environmental Damages Fund, forfeiting the illegally imported eel meat to the Crown and implementing a training program for the company's employees focused on compliance with WAPPRIITA. As the company has completed the conditions of the agreement, the charge against it was withdrawn.



European Eel at a Fish Market

Environment and Climate Change Canada enforcement officers discovered the offence by inspecting and sampling a shipment which had been declared as American eel meat. DNA analysis determined that European eel meat was mixed with the American eel meat. Though similar in appearance, European eel is listed in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), while American eel meat is not.

All fines and payments made as a result of these convictions and alternative measures, are directed to the Government of Canada's Environmental Damages Fund and used to support projects that benefit the natural environment.

4.3. Collaboration with provincial and territorial partners

As noted in Section 1.2, several provincial and territorial departments and federal agencies have memoranda of understanding or agreements with ECCC allowing designated officers to enforce WAPPRIITA. The formal collaborations with federal departments and federal agencies include, but are not limited to, Canada Border Services, Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Department of Fisheries and Oceans. The collaboration between the federal government and its provincial and territorial partners is beneficial given their shared mandate, and results in better coordination of efforts and resources in undertaking wildlife enforcement actions, especially when dealing with large-scale operations.

5. International Cooperation

5.1. CITES Conferences of the Parties

The CITES Conference of the Parties (CoP) meets once every two or three years. During the period between meetings of the CoP, the Animals Committee, the Plants Committee and the Standing Committee implement directives received from the preceding CoP and prepare for the next CoP. The 19th Meeting of the CITES ([CoP19](#)) took place in Panama City, Panama, from November 14 to 25, 2022. Parties considered 52 proposals relating to the protection of species affected by international trade, and adopted 45 of these proposals, affecting over 500 species.

Canada initiated a public consultation process approximately three months prior to the CoP19 that included a dedicated CITES web page to inform stakeholders, Indigenous groups and the Canadian public of the ongoing consultation process, extensive email distribution inviting stakeholders, Indigenous groups and the Canadian public to submit comments on the CoP19 proposals. ECCC also participated in the 4th Global meeting of the Wildlife Enforcement Network (WEN). The WEN meeting brought together law enforcement representatives from several countries to discuss increased partnerships, enhanced information sharing and exchanging of best practices.

A virtual public consultation meeting took place in September 2022 to discuss the CoP19 proposals. The meeting was attended by non-government organizations, industry associations, other federal departments and interested members of the public. ECCC highlighted during the consultation that Canada uses a consistent principles-based approach to decision-making at CITES CoPs, and that based on the scientific data, Canada will not support the listing of species to the CITES Appendices where it is clear that the species' survival is not negatively impacted by trade or where species do not meet the CITES biological criteria for listing in the Appendices. The Canadian positions on species proposals and working documents were developed through consultation with government agencies and stakeholders. Species proposals were carefully reviewed and the information was evaluated against the CITES listing criteria.

The [CoP19 outcomes](#) are posted on the Government of Canada website.

Canada submitted one proposal to amend Appendices I and II and co-submitted one working document with Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Senegal and the United States of America.

- A proposal to amend annotations #1, #4, and #14 for flora species and Appendix-I listed species of Orchids (*Orchidaceae*) reflecting consensus recommendations made by the Standing Committee at its 74th meeting to delete “in solid or liquid media” from the annotations. This amendment would facilitate the interpretation and implementation for relevant flora specimens in international trade. The proposal was adopted by consensus.
- A working document to propose measures to enhance the implementation of the transport requirements for both live animals and plants by making relevant content of the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) *Live Animals Regulations and Perishable Cargo Regulations* accessible to all Parties and by offering training and sharing best practices. The document was accepted with some amendments for clarity and resulted in Decisions directed to the CITES Secretariat and the Animal and Plant Committees.

Other items of interest to Canada at CoP19 included the adoption of 10 proposals to add or transfer to Appendix II species that are found in Canada. The affected species are: Aleutian cackling goose (*Branta canadensis leucopareia*), Blue shark (*Prionace glauca*), Common musk turtle (*Sternotherus odoratus*), Common snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*), Spiny softshell turtle (*Apalone spinifera*), Greater short-horned lizard (*Phrynosoma hernandesi*), Pygmy short-horned lizard (*Phrynosoma douglasii*), Roseroots (*Rhodiola rosea* and *Rhodiola crenulata*) and Short-tailed albatross (*Phoebastria albatrus*).

The listing of Roseroots (*Rhodiola spp.*) in Appendix II will include Annotation #2: “all parts and derivatives except: a) seeds and pollen; and b) finished products packaged and ready for retail trade.” As a result of the listing, Canadian exporters of cultivated *Rhodiola rosea*, which is used to produce herbal medicinal products, will be required to obtain CITES permits.



CITES provides that amendments to Appendices I and II adopted at a meeting of the CoP shall enter into force 90 days after that meeting for all Parties (for CoP19, this is February 23, 2023), except for amendments with a delayed entry into force and for those Parties who make a reservation. Many Parties have difficulty meeting this short timeline. Following CoP19, Canada submitted a temporary reservation to the CITES Depository Government (Switzerland) to ensure Canada’s compliance with the Convention while Canada completes its domestic treaty implementation process. By entering this reservation, Canada has indicated it will not be bound by the CoP19 amendments to the CITES Appendices until such a time as it has completed its domestic treaty implementation process.

5.2. CITES committees and working groups

Canada participated in a number of committees and working groups to foster ongoing cooperation with international partners under the Convention. In particular, the meetings of the CITES Standing Committee, the Plants Committee and the Animals Committee are instrumental in developing international policy for the implementation of the Convention. Decisions made by these bodies may affect Canada’s obligations under CITES and greatly influence the decisions ultimately adopted by the CoP.

Members of these committees represent six major geographical regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, Central and South America and the Caribbean, and Oceania). The North American region is comprised of Canada, the United States and Mexico. ECCC continued to lead Canada’s participation and engagement with the North American Region at meetings of these committees.

Members of the committees are elected at every CoP. Prior to CoP, Canada served as the North American Representative on the Standing Committee and Ms. Carolina Caceres from ECCC additionally served as Chair of the CITES Standing Committee. At CoP19, Canada completed its mandate as Representative and Chair. The United States was elected by consensus as the North American Representative, with Canada serving as the alternative Representative. The CoP additionally elected Ms. Cecilia Lougheed of ECCC as the North American Member of the CITES Plants Committee.

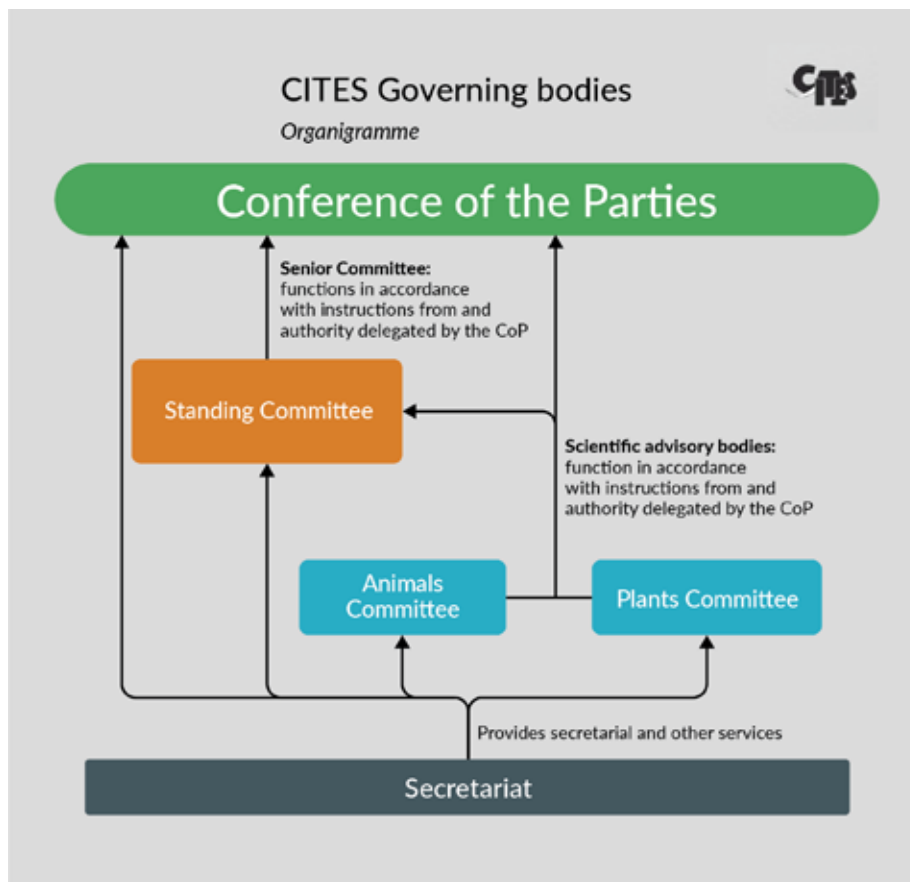
The 74th Standing Committee meeting was held from March 6 to 11, 2022 in Lyon, France and the 75th Standing Committee meeting was held in Panama City prior to the CITES CoP19. Canada, as Chair, continued to lead the work of the CITES Standing Committee and held various informal briefing sessions with Committee members to ensure the delivery of the Committee’s deliberations from the 19th meeting of the CoP.

Canada continued to lead and participate in the work of the Standing Committees via email or through virtual meetings, and chaired various intersessional working groups to help advance the implementation of the Convention. Among them, Canada chaired the working group on the role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international wildlife trade. The results of the work of this working group were reflected in [CoP19 Doc 23.1](#), submitted by the Standing Committee to CITES CoP19.

Due to the ongoing disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the CITES Animals Committee and Plants Committee did not meet in 2022. Nonetheless, Canada continued to engage with the Committee Chairs and with colleagues in the North American Region on matters under the purview of these expert Committees.

The 76th Standing Committee meeting was held in Panama City following the CITES CoP19. The United States of America, as the new representative of North America, additionally took on the role of Chair of the Standing Committee. Canada was nominated to serve as the Chair of the Engagement of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities working group and as the Co-Chair of the Review of CITES Provisions Related to Trade in Specimens of Animals and Plants Not of Wild Source working group.

Figure 7. Organigramme of CITES governing bodies



© CITES Secretariat

5.3. International cooperation in enforcement operations

In October 2022, ECCC's enforcement officers participated in INTERPOL's Operation Thunder 2022 (codenamed Op Thunder 2022), an international enforcement operation coordinated by INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization, aimed at cracking down on crime networks, illegal wildlife and timber trade. Op Thunder 2022 involved 125 countries worldwide, an increase of 7 countries in relation to last year's operation and the largest number of participating countries since the launch of the Thunder series in 2017. This operation focussed on identifying the illegal import and export of wildlife products at ports of entry and resulted in almost 2,200 seizures worldwide of illegally traded specimens listed by CITES.

In partnership with the Canada Border Services Agency, ECCC enforcement officers conducted inspections at ports of entry, international mail centers, shops and personal dwellings.

Over the course of the operation, many of the wildlife shipments that were inspected complied with ECCC's legislation but there were numerous shipments that did not and ECCC enforcement officers took multiple enforcement actions. ECCC officers inspected and seized numerous illegal shipments of CITES species that arrived without permits including crocodile oil, Prickly Pear cactuses, hippopotamus and walrus parts, live Golden Thread Turtles, a giraffe skull, and several other CITES species at international airports in Toronto, Montreal, and Calgary as well as freight terminals across the country.



Prickly Pear Cactus Pads

5.4. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

In 2022, ECCC participated in two illegal wood trafficking training sessions delivered by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to assist enforcement officers in identifying and detaining illegally harvested wood arriving in Canada. This training was extremely valuable and allowed ECCC enforcement officers to engage with its international partners and stakeholders to curb the illegal trade in wood.

6. How to report wildlife and environmental crimes

Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Canadian Crime Stoppers Association have an important memorandum of understanding that leads to better detection and reporting of crimes against federally protected wildlife. This collaboration sets a foundation for strategic and technical cooperation, including joint public-awareness projects, the exchange of expertise, and the promotion of cooperation with 87 Crime Stoppers programs across Canada.

People who have information about wildlife and environmental crime can report it anonymously to [Crime Stoppers](#) at 1-800-222-8477 (in Quebec: 1-800-711-1800) or [submit a webtip](#).

This collaboration with Crime Stoppers supports the conservation of wild species and helps ensure the law-abiding citizens who depend on wildlife for enjoyment, recreation, and their livelihoods will have the opportunity to do so for generations to come.

7. Additional Information

For more information about WAPPRIITA, please visit the [website of the Government of Canada](#) or contact ECCC at:

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